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TITLE: BACKPACK ATTACHMENT FOR IMPROVED DISTRIBUTION OF THE BACKPACK WEIGHT ACROSS A USER'S SHOULDERS

Preliminary Amendment: CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently amended) A backpack attachment for use with backpacks that have a bag-like body (ES) and a pair of shoulder straps (T), in particular backpacks (Z) used by school attendants, being effective to distribute the backpack weight in a rationalized fashion across ~~the a~~ user's shoulders, ~~and characterized in that it comprises~~ said attachment comprising:

two curved members (H) arranged to stiffen substantially ~~the~~ sections of the shoulder straps (T) ~~that lie closest to the~~ an upper region of the bag-like body (ES).

2. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 1, further comprising:

two substantially inflexible curved members mounted in place ~~of the~~ at closest sections of the shoulder straps (T) to the upper region of the bag-like body (ES).

3. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 1, further comprising:

two substantially inflexible curved members associated with the closest sections of the shoulder straps (T) to the upper region of the bag-like body (ES).

4. (Currently amended) The attachment of ~~Claims 1 to 3~~, Claim 1, wherein said substantially inflexible curved members (1) have ~~their~~ an underside thereof lined with a soft yielding material (3).

5. (Currently amended) The attachment of ~~Claims 1 to 4~~, consisting of Claim 1, further comprising:

a pair of substantially inflexible curved members (1), each as member having a one-piece construction (2,2A).

6. (Currently amended) The attachment of ~~Claims 1 to 4~~, Claim 1, further comprising:

a pair of substantially inflexible curved members (1), wherein said the curved members are made up comprised of several pieces (6) jointed to one another.

7. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 5, wherein said the curved members (1) are of hollow construction and adapted to be slipped slippable each over one of said shoulder straps (T).

8. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 5, wherein said the curved members (1) are hinge-ably connected to a holder (4), said holder being adapted to be affixed to the upper region of the bag-like body (CS) of the backpack (Z).

9. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 6, having wherein the curved members (1) made up are comprised of hollow pieces adapted to be slipped slippable over said shoulder straps (T).

10. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 6, wherein ~~the leading one (7) of said hinge-connected pieces (6)~~ in each curved member ~~(1)~~ can be ~~is~~ affixed to the upper region of the bag-like body ~~(CS) of the backpack (Z)~~, with ~~the a trailing one hinge-connected piece~~ carrying the shoulder strap ~~(T)~~ fastened thereto.

11. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 6, wherein ~~the a leading one (9) of said hinge-connected pieces (6)~~ in each curved member ~~(1)~~ can be ~~is~~ affixed to the upper region of the bag-like body ~~(CS) of the backpack (Z)~~, with the shoulder strap ~~(T)~~ extending from ~~said the leading piece (9)~~ through ~~the other pieces (6)~~ connected thereto.

12. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 6, wherein the curved members ~~(1)~~ are made up comprised of several shaped pieces ~~(11)~~, each adapted to be associated with the shoulder straps ~~(T)~~ in a detachable manner, at least one ~~(14)~~ in a lockable manner.

13. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 12, wherein ~~said the leading pieces (11)~~ of ~~said the curved members (1)~~ can be ~~is~~ associated with the shoulder straps by ~~means of~~ releasable hoops ~~(12)~~, ~~the other another piece (14)~~ being associated with the shoulder straps by ~~means of~~ a releasable camlock device ~~(15,16,17)~~.

14. (Currently amended) The attachment of Claim 12, wherein further comprising:
a locking arrangement ~~(19,20)~~ intervenes intervening between ~~the~~ jointed pieces ~~(11)~~ of each curved member for maintaining a set angle between individual ~~ones of~~ said pieces.

15. (Currently amended) The attachment of ~~Claims 12 and 13~~, WHEREIN said Claim 12, wherein a set angle between individual jointed pieces (11) of each curved member (11) is adjustable.

16. (Currently amended) The attachment of ~~Claims 12 to 14~~, Claim 14, wherein said locking arrangement (19,20) comprises, mounted on one side of each said jointed pieces (119), a gear wheel (19) and a lockable spring-biased slider (20), said slider being formed with an end jaw (21) adapted to engage engageable with teeth of a gear wheel (19) on the adjacent one of said pieces.

17. (Currently amended) The attachment of ~~any of the preceding Claims~~, Claim 1, for use in a method of correcting abnormal curvatures of the spine.